

STANT JTBALD  
17 APRIL 1971

FOIA b3b

# Pawley: Adlai Stevenson to Quit Over Bay of Pigs

CPYRGT  
WILLIAM SMILEY  
Herald Staff Writer

The full story of the disastrous Bay of Pigs has never been told, but Miami's William D. Pawley, who played a major role behind the scenes, has thrown some new light upon the reasons for the failure. Pawley also revealed hitherto untold details about the role he played in obtaining the freedom of three of the survivors 15 months later with payment of \$175,000 ransom.

Pawley, a wiry anti-Communist, has been inside or about the fringes of U.S. activities in Latin America for more than 40 years.

"By the time the President (Eisenhower) realized that Castro was, indeed, a Communist and not the Simon Bolivar he had been depicted," said Pawley, "the State Department already had forced Batista to flee, leaving Cuba in control of Castro. I had several conferences with the President and finally he was convinced that the anti-Communist Cubans in Florida should be armed and given every assistance to overthrow the Communist regime."

PAWLEY WORKED closely with Allen Dulles and the CIA in recruiting young Cubans from the anti-Castro refugees arriving in Miami. These were flown to Guatemala for training.

Among the Cubans assisting Pawley was Fabio Freyre, 40, father of eight. Freyre was from a well-known Cuban family and was then living in Palm Beach. After helping to recruit enough men for a brigade, Freyre insisted on going to Guatemala himself and joining the men he had signed up.

"The brigade had been given 12 attack bombers," said Pawley, "and in the plan it was contemplated that Castro's small air force would be the band went ashore. In



William D. Pawley  
... recalls his role

fact, it was the opinion of the military experts who advised us in connection with the landing that if the enemy air force was not destroyed the invasion should not be attempted. The Cuban fighters were led to believe, as were the rest of us, that there would be no air power to confront them."

In order to throw Castro off guard, President John Kennedy announced on April 12, five days before the scheduled invasion, that there would be no "intervention in Cuba by United States armed forces." At that time Kennedy had been President a little more than three months and appeared to be strongly in favor of the invasion, planned during the administration of his predecessor.

IN THE PREDAWN darkness of Saturday, April 15, bombers belonging to the invaders bombarded four Cuban airports, destroying all but six of Castro's planes. A second strike, planned for Sunday morning, never came off.

"What happened," said Pawley, "was that Adlai Stevenson, the United States ambassador to the United Nations, got in touch with the secretary of state, Dean Rusk, and got him to go to President Kennedy. Steven-

son made it clear to Rusk that he would not remain as ambassador to the United Nations if the United States permitted any more bombing of Cuba.

"Rusk went to the White House, accompanied by Chester Bowles, the President's special adviser on Latin American affairs, and they persuaded the President to call off the air strikes planned for Sunday morning. Use of the bombers was limited to the invasion area, and the admiral in charge of the Navy operations was ordered to give no air assistance to the invaders.

"Right then and there the President should have ordered the admiral to call off the invasion and return to Puerto Cabezas (the Nicaraguan port which served as the staging area). Unfortunately, the landing of the men was allowed to proceed on Monday morning as planned. The operation was carried out with the full expectation that the men would be free of attack from the air. When Castro's air force struck they were unprepared."

THE FIRST DAY Cuban jets shot down five of the invaders' bombers which were on the scene to protect the landing. The Castro forces also sank one of the ships used to transport the exiles, with considerable loss of life. Another of the transport vessels was damaged.

"Meanwhile, 35 of our jet fighting planes were flying above the battle and could have knocked Castro's planes out of the sky in a few minutes," said Pawley, "but the admiral had orders from the White House and he dared not interfere.

"After witnessing the fiasco, the admiral ordered the remaining boats to withdraw and the men ashore were They eventually fell to the

overwhelming numbers of Castro troops.

The prisoners were paraded into the huge Blanquita Theater in Havana where they were individually interrogated before television cameras and radio microphones. Pawley heard the voices of two close friends, Fabio Freyre and George Govin, listening with admiration and concern as they defended the United States and condemned Cuban communism.

A year passed. Efforts to obtain the release of the men proved futile. Meanwhile, Pawley received word that his friends, Freyre and Govin, were starving to death in prison.

"I THOUGHT there must be some way to get these men out," said Pawley. "I knew Castro needed money desperately. It occurred to me that for a price we might get the men released. I consulted with Freyre's relatives, and they agreed that if the price was within their means they would raise the money. I went to see Govin's family and got the same answer."

Pawley called his friend, Livingston Merchant, U.S. Ambassador to Canada, a country which maintained diplomatic relations with Cuba. Would Merchant ask the Canadians to find out from Castro if he would put a price on the prisoners? Castro agreed.

Pawley, meanwhile, had begun to worry about the consequences of ransoming two men from well-to-do Cuban families in exile — and both of them white. It would give Castro an important propaganda lever. He would be able to point out that only the rich came out, while the poor boys, particularly the black, were given no consideration.

continued